Wikipedia and Teen Team together to BEAT CANCER for 3 cents

Wikipedia used by teen to beat cancer by developing an accurate diagnostic test for 3 cents.

As a teenager, Jack Andraka with only Wikipedia and Open Access tools produced a working model of an accurate diagnostic test to beat cancer. This is exciting news because it means the public can contribute to scientific research in powerful ways. The public can learn how to do their own research with ThinkWell.

You can think it up, we can help you plan and collaboratively we as the public can build ideas into tools for medicine at ThinkWell.

It takes more than brains to make a difference in cancer research. Many people with full academic access and many colleagues fail to make a dent in this field. To make a difference you may not have to the best and brightest or even well connected but you must be prepared to persevere and to back yourself. If you are afraid of controversy, uncertainty and rejection you can not make it. Jack Andraka a sixteen year old teen is already an inventor, scientist and cancer researcher. He was motivated by the death of an uncle and one of his friends who died with Cancer. He considered that if cheap easy diagnosis was available more people could escape death from pancreatic, ovarian and lung cancers. He had received multiple rejection emails concerning his idea before
he finally got a positive reply and a chance for lab space from Dr. Anirban Maitra, Professor of Pathology, Oncology, and Chemical and Bio-molecular Engineering at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. I find it fitting that Jack used Wikipedia for scientific invention. Many students have been marked down for using Wikipedia with teachers insisting it is a non-academic resource. Unknown to some academics, Wikipedia is fast becoming a source of medical information in low resource countries.

The result of his project was a new dipstick diagnostic test for pancreatic cancer that employs a paper sensor that looks like a diabetic test strip. The strip is used to test for the level of mesothelin, a pancreatic cancer biomarker, in blood or urine. This can determine cheaply, non invasively and simply whether or not a patient has early-stage pancreatic cancer. The test is 90 percent accurate in detecting the presence of mesothelin [1]. According to Andraka, it is 168 times faster, 26,000 times cheaper (costing around three cents), and about 400 times more sensitive than the current diagnostic tests. It is fast too and only takes five minutes to run. He says the test is also effective for detecting ovarian and lung cancer, due to the same mesothelin biomarker they have in common.[2]

I meet so many brilliant people who quit maybe just short of the finish line or who allow themselves to be derailed by the opinions of others. They hold themselves up to artificial standards without realizing that inside themselves are the problem solving abilities to create solutions. Being an inventor and problem solver to beat cancer is so much more complex than just studying and getting those Distinctions. Often we struggle with insecurity and uncertainty. Take a look at this article and you will see that *A little stupidity in science* just might be the key to success and thinking outside the cage. Accomplished professionals can grow science by making room in their hearts to give others a chance to pursue
their dream to beat cancer, make new limbs or change brains. We all spend time at the table of the novice and at the platform of the accomplished, how we respond to others during this time can change the face of science and medicine. For Jack Andraka and Professor Maitra life will never be the same because of what they offered to others by making room for the dream to beat cancer and pursuing this with hard work, diligence and the refusal to quit. The reality starts with an idea that is cultivated, supported and put into practice.

REFERENCES
